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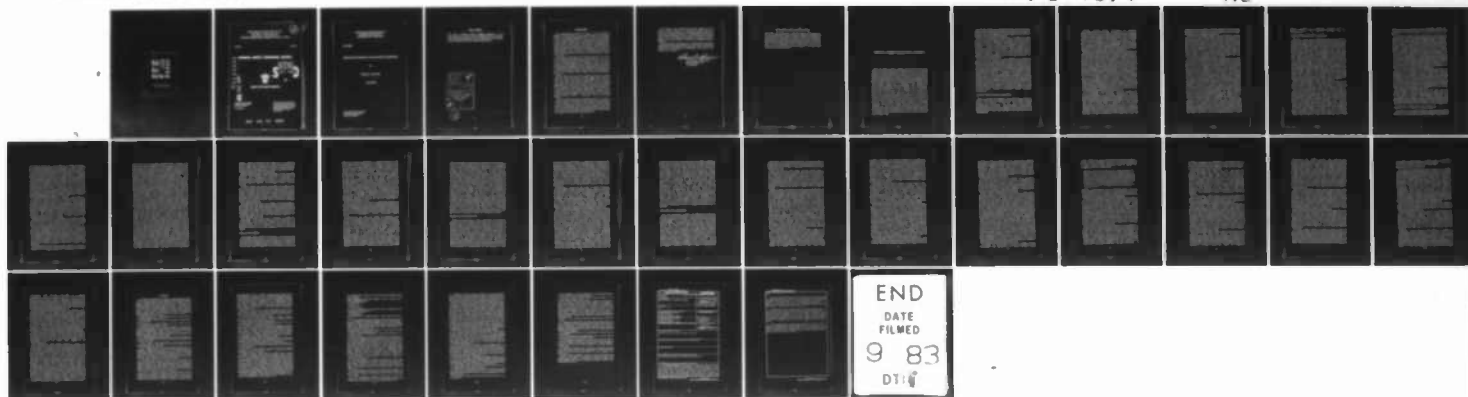
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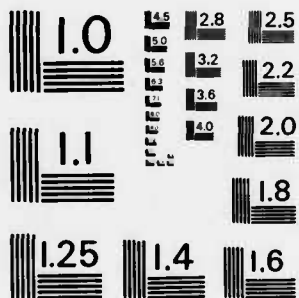
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**STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE
US ARMY WAR COLLEGE
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IMPROVING EUROPE'S CONVENTIONAL DEFENSES

by

Edward A. Corcoran

1 June 1983

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FOREWORD

This memorandum examines the nature of the conventional balance in Europe today, and proposes methods for improving NATO's conventional capabilities. The author notes that public concern about increasing levels of nuclear weapons in Europe has spurred a search on both sides of the Atlantic for alternative ways to meet NATO's defense needs. Unfortunately, the parallel Soviet conventional force buildup and an awareness of many of NATO's defense problems (e.g., manpower and equipment shortfalls, unit maldeployments, and overreliance on US reinforcements) help to reinforce impressions that a NATO conventional defense is simply out of reach.

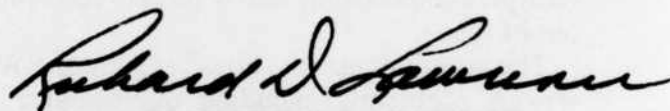
The author contends, however, that the Warsaw Pact has its own serious problems, including questionable reliability of its non-Soviet forces, lengthy lines of communication, and an overreliance on armor and light defenses in its tactical rear areas. The author believes that by exploiting such Pact problems, NATO can develop a credible conventional defense. This memorandum proposes such a defense based on four main combat elements: regular maneuver forces, Area Combat Troops, support units, and penetration elements.

Area Combat Troops would be strong territorial forces—largely reservists—with the mission of actively engaging Pact forces to insure they suffer both attrition and disruption prior to the time when they move onto NATO territory. By selective standoff engagement of critical Pact elements and constant reporting of Pact movements, Area Combat Troops could take a heavy toll of any invading forces while regular combat forces would be able to conduct a much more effective mobile defense. Support troops could also develop capabilities to fight, when necessary, in the same general fashion as—and in conjunction with—Area Combat Troops.

The author argues that by presenting poor targets for nuclear or chemical strikes, Area Combat Troops would discourage Pact use of these weapons. At the same time, being territorial elements designed for operations within their own countries, they would pose no external threat. This would undermine Pact claims that its heavy armor forces are needed to counter a threat from NATO and would support long-term arms reduction efforts.

The Strategic Issues Research Memoranda program of the Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, provides a means for timely dissemination of analytical papers which are not necessarily constrained by format or conformity with institutional policy. These memoranda are prepared on subjects of current importance in areas related to the authors' professional work or interests.

This memorandum was prepared as a contribution to the field of national security research and study. As such, it does not reflect the official view of the College, the Department of the Army, or the Department of Defense.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Richard D. Lawrence", is positioned above the printed name.

RICHARD D. LAWRENCE
Major General, USA
Commandant

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR

EDWARD A. CORCORAN, Ph.D., is on the staff of Wilson College and works as a private consultant in Soviet affairs. In addition to a doctorate in political science from Columbia University, he holds the certificate of their Russian Institute and has had extensive Soviet area experience as a member of the US Army's Foreign Area Officer program. His Army assignments included service in the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence in Headquarters, US Army Europe; a tour as a liaison officer to the Soviet Commander in Chief in East Germany; and four years' experience as a strategic analyst and study team manager at the Strategic Studies Institute of the US Army War College.

IMPROVING EUROPE'S CONVENTIONAL DEFENSES

Since the 1950's, nuclear weapons have been the rock upon which the entire NATO defense edifice was built. This initial emphasis on nuclear weapons was a conscious decision by countries tired of war and anxious to get on with the long and costly task of rebuilding their shattered economies. Instead of developing sturdy armies to counter those of the Soviet bloc, the United States and its West European allies chose a less expensive option—an apparently solid defense relying on a relatively small number of overwhelmingly powerful US nuclear weapons. For several decades this nuclear approach served the Alliance well. Its members prospered in evident security. Now the decision has come back to haunt NATO.¹ The West's emphasis on nuclear weapons has skewed the resulting arms buildup in that direction. Through the decades, the Soviets have matched the US nuclear arsenal while the numbers of weapons on both sides have grown dramatically. The path of nuclear defense, which earlier seemed so beguilingly attractive, now threatens to lead into a blind alley of nuclear standoff. At best, the nuclear stalemate reemphasizes the conventional arsenals, in which the East traditionally has enjoyed superiority. At worst, the dependence on nuclear weapons may lead to cataclysm. More and more insistently the question is raised: Is there another path?

By the early 1980's, the emotional rejection of the old path by small groups of antinuclear activists had mushroomed to rallies of dramatic size and broadened to include support from prominent religious, civilian, and military figures.

Much of the opposition expressed before the 1980's had voiced concern over the increasing levels of nuclear weapons on both sides, but offered few alternatives. Reacting to this void in defense planning, a number of analysts are beginning to explore new options. For example, four prominent American statesmen have examined with dismay the profusion of nuclear weapons and the "total impossibility for either side of any guarantee against unlimited escalation." They call for NATO to reverse its current military strategy and to adopt a no-first-use policy backed by "an effective conventional defense."²

And there's the rub. Calls for an emphasis on conventional forces are not new. Writing a decade earlier in the same journal, Michael Howard stressed the need for stronger conventional forces "not to act according to traditional concepts as if nuclear weapons did not exist, but to operate so as to minimize the possibility of the adversary using his nuclear forces at all." But Howard then added the additional requirement "to maximize the credibility of the nuclear threat of their own government."³ Similarly, a German response to the no-first-use proposal stressed the importance of the nuclear option as a deterrent in the face of Soviet conventional superiority, and expressed deep skepticism about the feasibility of a conventional balance.⁴ Do the economic pressures on NATO military budgets, the decided Pact conventional superiority, and the disturbing evidence of Pact chemical and biological warfare activities' make a NATO conventional defense essentially unrealizable?

CONVENTIONAL FORCE PROBLEMS

The conventional force imbalance is exacerbated by a number of factors which favor the Warsaw Pact. For example, NATO concedes the initiative to the Pact, even though NATO decisionmaking requires time-consuming multilateral consultations. But the most sweeping NATO problems concern three operational issues: forward defense, rear area security, and reinforcement.

NATO's forward defense, necessitated by political considerations and by the lack of strategic depth in Central Europe,⁶ leaves the defense vulnerable to massed breakthroughs. The Pact's military doctrine and its large armor forces are ideally suited to this vulnerability. Furthermore, a number of major NATO units are stationed far from their frontline positions. In a crisis, even with warning of a Pact mobilization, a NATO concern not to appear provocative could easily inhibit a decision to deploy units forward. As a result, many NATO forward defense positions might not even be manned at the outbreak of hostilities.

Emphasis on forward defense also has inhibited planning for operations within NATO territory, particularly in urban areas. In the immediate postwar period, the US nuclear umbrella protected European cities, while US strategic superiority insured that the risk was also low for US cities. Furthermore, if deterrence failed, Warsaw Pact doctrine stressed bypassing population centers and fighting in the relatively open countryside. Consequently, NATO did not develop urban defense forces which could have relied on cities as strongpoints of the allied defense. But 30 years of urban sprawl have totally obliterated any prospects of defending cities by fighting in the countryside. At the same time, NATO's arsenal has come to include such a diverse stock of theater nuclear weapons that its very fighting capability threatens widespread urban destruction, particularly if Pact units stay close to urban areas as a means of discouraging NATO use of nuclear options.⁷ Further, the widespread lack of planning for systematic fighting within NATO territory can make an attack more attractive to the Warsaw Pact by easing its problem of consolidating control over any seized territory and simplifying security within its tactical rear area.

A second major NATO problem is rear area security. Few NATO installations are hardened. Headquarters elements, telecommunications sites, support units, port facilities, and storage depots (including fuel, ammunition, and equipment reserves) are at lightly defended locations well known to the Warsaw Pact. It is also clear that the Pact plans to capitalize on these NATO vulnerabilities. Hundreds of Pact agents are either in place in Western Europe or could be infiltrated easily prior to hostilities. Added to this are the Pact's own deep strike weapons and its sizable airmobile forces and operational maneuver groups which are specifically trained for disruption of the NATO rear area.⁸ By

simply promoting confusion and panic among the NATO civilian population, the Pact might be able to hopelessly clog the NATO transportation net in some critical sectors.

A particularly troublesome aspect of rear area security is the high percentage of support troops and their modest preparations for combat operations. In a US infantry division, about half of the division base is headquarters or support troops. They are typically required to fight as infantrymen when necessary, but this is usually taken to mean fighting as riflemen in perimeter security roles or against small raiding parties. There is no combat organization and little training in the use of machine guns, antiarmor weapons, mines or explosives, particularly among the growing percentage of women soldiers. This means that tens of thousands of US troops can have only a minimal impact in direct combat.⁹

A third NATO operational problem is reinforcement. The bulk of NATO reinforcements comes from the United States. But other contingencies (say Korea, Cuba, or the Middle East) could easily disrupt the flow of these reinforcements by reducing the strategic lift or the forces available for Europe. Also, projected US deployment times to Central Europe compare poorly with those of massive Soviet reinforcements.¹⁰ And, as with the forward movement of units currently stationed in Europe, reinforcement early in a crisis could be hampered by a concern not to appear provocative—a concern the Soviets would undoubtedly work hard to manipulate and intensify. Moreover, is reinforcement feasible once Western Europe is under attack? What would be the effects of sabotage on the ports? Commando strikes on key reception facilities or transportation nodes? Conventional or chemical strikes on equipment depots, including materials prepositioned to support early arriving units? Contested airspace over major airfields? Streams of refugees blocking highways? Hostile submarine activity on the sea lanes? Such questions highlight the military risks of relying on a cumbersome system of long-distance reinforcement.

Any new NATO defense approaches must address these problems. Western Europe must better capitalize on advantages available to the defender—prepared positions, interior lines, and operation on familiar territory. It must also better exploit the high lethality of modern weapons and the Pact's own vulnerabilities: the questionable reliability of both the East European forces and Soviet ethnic minorities, the Pact overemphasis on armor, and the

Soviets' uncertain and potentially vulnerable lines of reinforcement.

THE EAST-WEST POLITICAL SETTING

Militarily, East European cooperation would be critical for the success of any Soviet attack on NATO Europe—about half of the immediately available Pact divisions in Central Europe are East European. The Soviets have clearly demonstrated, perhaps with the exception of Rumania, that they can coerce their Pact allies into adopting desired internal policies and generally into supporting Soviet foreign policy. But it is questionable whether they could coerce them into war, and the fighting reliability of East European forces remains quite suspect.¹¹ It is patently clear that the same Soviet troops cannot be used simultaneously to attack NATO and to coerce Eastern Europe. East European recalcitrance could even frustrate Soviet attempts to mount an attack on NATO— withholding forces would reduce both the troops available to the Pact command and the Soviet ability to insure control of its lines of communication. Except for clear prospects of a quick victory, it is hard to project motives which would induce East European political elites to support a Pact military thrust. For them, this would involve high risks of domestic destruction with little expectation of gain, particularly as NATO builds its capabilities to conduct military operations in Warsaw Pact territory.

And so, East European attitudes have a direct impact on the European military balance. NATO strategy must be sensitive to these concerns by reducing as much as possible any potential incentives for Eastern Europe to support a Soviet military thrust.

This raises the question of the extent to which the offensive aspects of the NATO posture can be viewed as a credible threat to Eastern Europe. In the early 1950's, despite the purely defensive aims expressed in the NATO charter, there were widespread hopes that some day, somehow, an opportunity might arise for the free world to "roll back" the Soviet occupation of East Europe.¹² NATO forces were compatible with these vague hopes. Although smaller than the Pact forces, they had a significant technological advantage, were backed by a considerable US nuclear superiority, and were clearly capable of offensive as well as defensive operations should an opportunity arise. Tank divisions, fighter wings, artillery batteries, and infantry battalions can all fight

offensively and, indeed, prefer to do so. Khrushchev himself has said that the often paranoid Stalin "lived in terror of an enemy attack."

The events in Hungary in 1956 forced NATO to confront these vague aspirations and to conclude that the prospects for a military solution to European security were negligible. Talk of "rollback" ceased. Now, with the continued rise of Soviet military strength, the very thought of a NATO military move eastward has become an absurdity. An absurdity, that is, to NATO. But not necessarily to the East. NATO's fighting elements still retain an inherent offensive capability, a capability which current attention to deep strike operations would expand. Unceasing Pact propaganda on the horrors of World War II keeps alive the specter of a German menace. On a propaganda level, where ideological preconceptions are combined with the ogre of "German revanchism," the threat can strike a responsive chord in Eastern Europe and justify Soviet pressures to maintain excessively large defense establishments. To the extent that the NATO military posture can be pictured as offensive, it helps to penetrate such justifications.

The more clearly defensive the NATO military posture, the harder it is for the Soviets to justify to their allies (and to their own population) the burdensome levels of high Pact military expenditures. East European resistance, especially by the Poles and Rumanians, to preferred Soviet spending levels has been a source of contention within the Warsaw Pact in the past. NATO must show enough strength, cohesion, and durability without posing an excessive threat so that the Soviets ultimately conclude the benefits from their military programs are so marginal that they cannot justify current levels of military spending.¹⁴

But ultimately is a long time away. For NATO, there will be no ultimate solutions if the short-term military strategy fails. The military strategy is—in effect—a holding strategy, expending assets as necessary for defense while political, economic, and psychological actions remove incentives for military solutions and encourage the Soviets and East Europeans to shift resources into developmental programs and eventual peaceful social competition.

CONVENTIONAL DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS

Wars have a way of ending differently from what their initiators planned. For this reason alone, the Soviet leaders, both conscious

of history and cautious in their initiatives, are unlikely to start a war if they are not confident of a quick victory.¹⁵ But this is not the only reason. The Soviets are also well aware of the West's superior resources and of the potential for the Soviet empire to unravel. As a result, they have little incentive to strike against a prepared adversary. Therefore, NATO's conventional defense must appear credible enough so that in a crisis the Soviets are not tempted into adventurism by an apparently weak opponent. The NATO posture must also be as resistant as possible to neutralization by nuclear, chemical, or biological attack. Moreover, if such a force were clearly defensive in nature, it would lend support to NATO's political efforts. Such a conventional defense must focus on the Pact armor forces—the linchpin of the Pact structure for deep, fast penetration and quick victory. However, fashioning an effective defense against armor formations is no easy task.

Armored formations represent a relatively small number of discrete targets—an entire tank regiment, representing a quarter of a division's maneuver forces and covering a front several kilometers wide, has only about 150 major targets. Nevertheless, they are tough targets. Even in good visibility, aircraft are hard-pressed to engage tanks, particularly in the face of formidable Pact mobile air defense capabilities. With their mobility and hardness, tanks also are very difficult targets for artillery. A typical battlefield nuclear weapon striking a normally dispersed tank company may kill only a few of its tanks.

Pact armored formations, supported by massed artillery fire and operating under the cover of poor visibility or smoke (each Soviet tank has its own smoke generating system), can concentrate enormous firepower to shatter even a well-prepared defense.

However, Pact armor forces are not without their vulnerabilities. One prime vulnerability is their rigid command and control system. Pact tanks typically have one radio and are tightly controlled by commanders at each echelon. Maps are tightly controlled also, and are normally held only by these same commanders. The destruction of a handful of a regiment's tanks—those of its unit commanders—can cripple its operations. And these tanks are readily identified by position and external equipment, particularly multiple radio antennas.¹⁶

By choosing tactics of rapid penetration instead of area control, the Soviets set the stage for defenders to engage their main forces

and flanks with the carefully measured feints, leverages, and thrusts of a karate defense. Even more than most other tanks, Soviet tanks stress frontal armor at the expense of side and top protection. The Soviets take the classic gamble—that shock action can overwhelm a defender before he can take advantage of the attacker's exposed flanks and overextended logistic lines, or can bring his own military and psychological resources to bear.¹⁷ The Soviets cannot have their cake and eat it, striking deep yet retaining flank security. A moving tank column cannot afford to sweep its flanks every time a shot is fired from the side, but such shots have the potential to destroy its effectiveness by killing its commanders and neutralizing its minesweeping and air defense assets.¹⁸ Modern weapons enable defenders to engage tank-sized targets selectively from standoff distances up to three kilometers, by both direct and indirect fire weapons.¹⁹ Mortars firing antiarmor munitions with infrared or millimeter-wave homing sensors can wreak havoc on passing armor columns. Laser-guided weapons, smart bombs, and scatterable mines can provide significant augmentation firepower even to personnel operating behind enemy lines. Cluster bomblets and flechette ammunition are extremely effective against personnel in the open, including combat personnel at refueling or mess stops.

A tank screened by darkness, fog, rain, or smoke makes a very difficult target. But it also becomes very difficult for the crew, buttoned up in the protective armor of its vehicle, to follow what is happening outside, particularly to identify and engage flank targets. Under these conditions, tanks become very vulnerable to mines. Even simple systems of pulling mines across their route of movement can be very effective against tanks moving across hostile territory. Night or poor visibility also aids the defenders who can use radio warning nets and their superior knowledge of local terrain to choose vantage points for standoff attack. Presently, available munitions could also be specifically adapted to attack armor from the flanks. Short-range antiarmor missiles, for example, could be developed into a simple roadside-emplaced, command-detonated mine which could engage selected targets with a relatively high degree of safety for the defender. Even the standard dual-purpose 40mm round, now used with a variety of grenade launchers, could be adapted to such a role with a small firing tube. Its 2-inch armor penetration capability would make it a deadly weapon against all Pact lightly armored vehicles—personnel carriers, self-propelled

artillery, tracked air defense systems, light tanks, and command vehicles. High velocity weapons in the 30mm range could also be effective against tanks, particularly from the sides. Sniper and light weapons fire can insure that armored vehicles remain buttoned up, and also preclude use of external fuel tanks.

While the Soviets possess substantial artillery assets for softening prepared NATO defenses and increasingly acknowledge the protective role of dismounted infantry in an environment of handheld precision munitions, such actions are executed at the cost of rapid offensive maneuver, the paramount element of Soviet doctrine.

Armored vehicles rely heavily on resupply of ammunition and fuel. Soviet practice has supply columns following behind armor thrusts, preferably moving at night or under conditions of poor visibility. Needless to say, such columns are extremely vulnerable to ambush. Machine guns, mortars, or artillery firing incendiary munitions could create spectacular detonations hardly conducive to improving the morale of supply convoy personnel or sustaining Soviet combat operations.

Pact operations also rely on many lightly armed signal elements, messengers, and other small support elements operating freely in their tactical rear area. FROG and SCUD missile launch platoons also disperse throughout the countryside—certainly risky since the capabilities of an entire launch section could be destroyed by one well-placed sniper shot into electronic guidance equipment or liquid-fueled SCUD missiles.

The NATO defense must also be prepared to exploit the vulnerabilities of the Pact's strategic rear area. Soviet lines of communication cross 500 miles of Poland, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia, and are vulnerable to interdiction both by disaffected elements of the local populations and by deep NATO strikes.

TWO APPROACHES

John Mearsheimer contends that NATO is in such good shape conventionally that the Soviets cannot hope to win quickly. His argument is based largely on the sterile arithmetic of frontages and force densities, and generally slights the significance of follow-on echelons and chemical capabilities. But it provides some necessary

balance by underscoring the Pact's own serious problems.²⁰ The most serious fault in Mearsheimer's argument is his assumption that NATO responds adequately to strategic warning of an impending attack. Mearsheimer himself is acutely sensitive to the tenuous nature of this assumption. First of all, he clearly underscores this assumption in his introduction, and references Richard Betts's detailed analysis of NATO's political vulnerability in just such a situation.²¹ He then stresses simultaneous mobilization throughout the body of the paper. Finally, in his closing paragraph, he reemphasizes the criticality of a prompt NATO response to warning of any Pact mobilization. Stressing the importance of prompt and concerted NATO action, however, does not make the problem disappear. In fact, even pessimistic analysts would probably agree that NATO has a reasonable chance of holding if . . . *if* warning is available and used, *if* US reinforcement is not seriously impeded, *if* chemicals are not used, *if* NATO interdictions is effective, and *if* Soviet potential problems do materialize. Because he assumes all these *if*'s, Mearsheimer's conclusions are simply too iffy.

Another approach to the pressure for improved conventional force posture is the US Army's new concept for defense known as the AirLand Battle, and the parallel NATO emphasis on deep strike options.²² Emphasizing precision-guided munitions and focusing on interdiction of Pact reinforcements, these efforts seek to redress many of the shortcomings of NATO's conventional defense posture.

Unfortunately, the ability of NATO to implement these initiatives is problematic. For those seeking a new security blanket, a magic technological shield is offered as a means of reducing NATO's current reliance on the nuclear umbrella. However, the success of the AirLand Battle depends heavily on NATO interdiction efforts. NATO's capability for shallow interdiction through the use of its conventional artillery, although not expansive, is likely to be adequate. But deep interdiction will depend primarily on NATO's air forces²³ and, hence, on a favorable outcome of the air battle. This prospect is uncertain in the face of a better than 2:1 Pact superiority in tactical aircraft and substantial Pact air defense assets. The Army manual which describes the AirLand Battle tersely acknowledges that "long-range weapons will be scarce."²⁴ Moreover, many of the deep strike

weapons are still in development and will not be fielded for years to come. In addition, deep strike relies heavily on intelligence collection assets, including electronic warfare units, reconnaissance aircraft, and national technical systems.²⁵ In other words, it depends heavily on signal intelligence and overhead coverage. Overhead coverage is severely constrained by the darkness and poor weather, which may be normal operating conditions for days on end. Signal intelligence suffers from a general inability to pinpoint targets. It must penetrate strict Soviet radio discipline and is obviously vulnerable to deception. Data analysis relies largely on templates which, at best, direct attention to specific areas on the assumption that the enemy is following his normal procedures.²⁶ One is thus forced to agree with Trevor Dupuy's conclusion that target acquisition problems cast doubt on the whole concept.²⁷ Furthermore, in the US Army doctrine at least, deep strike emphasizes the particular effectiveness of nuclear weapons.²⁸ Certainly NATO would have to expect answering strikes on its own territory. Such a renewed emphasis on nuclear weapons can only reinforce Soviet claims that Eastern Europe must rely on the USSR for its security. Although the deep strike concept may offer some promise for attrition of Soviet rear echelon forces, it could easily degenerate into the "empty shell" envisioned by one European analyst—a Western strategy to which everyone pays lip service, but which fails to find genuine solutions to the challenges it faces.²⁹

SEEKING AN ALTERNATIVE

Despite the shortcomings of these approaches, the premise of this paper is that it is feasible to construct an effective conventional defense which also would provide inducements for long-term positive change within the Soviet bloc. Militarily, NATO seeks, in the words of its charter, "to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area" in the event of an armed attack against a member state. But the fundamental goal of the NATO states is much broader: "to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilization of their peoples founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law." Thus, NATO seeks to develop a durable structure of international relationships, inhibiting the causes of war and promoting long-term East-West accord through the implementation of such principles as those

expressed in the Helsinki Final Act: elimination of tensions and the increase of confidence between European states, economic and humanitarian cooperation, and freer circulation of information. Developing social, political, and economic approaches which will promote such change is beyond the scope of this paper. But the military means which check the Soviet threat should support, or at least not impede, the development of nonmilitary instruments of policy. The ultimate deterrent to conflict is not NATO's military posture, but the entire mosaic of political, military, social, and psychological factors which jointly inhibit the Warsaw Pact political leadership from seeking military solutions to East-West differences.

Unfortunately, because of the threat of nuclear blackmail, substantial NATO nuclear capabilities remain necessary. But *using* these capabilities to stem a Pact conventional invasion is no longer an attractive option. Only by strengthening its conventional capabilities can NATO improve its deterrent posture, while avoiding the psychological dilemma of having to choose between surrender or nuclear annihilation.³⁰ Furthermore, the development of a stronger but clearly defensive conventional posture could decrease Pact incentives to maintain large military forces and so improve the long-term prospects for European arms reduction.

With a population matching the Warsaw Pact's and an economic output several times as large, Western Europe clearly has the financial resources to construct its own defense. Nevertheless, West European political fragmentation, traditional economic priorities, and constrained geographic position have thwarted realization of this potential. The Pact has been able to translate its relatively modest resources into an impressive and threatening military presence considerably superior in conventional military forces.³¹ But convincing the NATO members that major shifts in strategic approaches are needed is no easy task. Deterrence has worked for almost 40 years. Why expend scarce resources now to strengthen war fighting capabilities which may simply lead to widespread devastation? Europe endured such devastation in the early 1940's and does not easily suffer the prospect of facing it again. Thanks to the US nuclear guarantee, it was long able to avoid such messy questions as how to conduct a fighting withdrawal through Nurnberg or a meeting engagement on the plains of Lower Saxony.

But when the nuclear balance shifted, doubts rose in Europe. Would the United States really risk Boston for Bremen? In the

past, there had been one final hope—if the unthinkable happened, perhaps the superpowers would annihilate each other and Europe would survive even the holocaust. But now that hope was lost with a new worry—nuclear war might be fought not over the heads of the Europeans, but under the feet of the superpowers. Europe might become the nuclear battlefield and the superpowers might emerge unscathed. Yet, if reducing the risk of nuclear devastation meant raising the risk of conventional devastation, the prospect was hardly an appealing one. In the final analysis, Soviet attainment of nuclear parity is forcing NATO Europe to prepare to fight if it wants to deter, to address such messy questions as Nurnberg and Lower Saxony. Yet, even serious war fighting preparations unfortunately cannot guarantee deterrence, for deterrence is ultimately based not on NATO's posture but on Soviet perceptions.³² No one can state exactly what has deterred the Soviets to this point. Against the background of a changed military balance, what will deter the emerging Soviet leadership of the 1980's remains an unanswerable question. Nevertheless, the construction of a militarily credible *and* politically feasible defense posture, consistent with apparent European preferences for a strong and reasonably low-cost yet nonthreatening deterrent, is possible.

THE FOUR-PART DEFENSE

Now that discussions of nuclear war fighting have raised the question of potential destruction so vividly, the emotional reaction of many Europeans to the West's current nuclear strategy is easily understandable. The conventional wisdom that a nonnuclear defense of Europe is infeasible makes any reassessment all the more painful. Yet, if Europe is to deter the Soviets while reducing the risk of nuclear war, the potential for improving conventional capabilities must be examined more thoroughly. Military planners need to focus research, development, and planning on how best to do this. While NATO's emphasis on forward defense reflects the relatively confined space available for defensive maneuver, the Alliance cannot hope to stop the Pact dead at the border.³³ Hence, NATO must address the question of how to fight on its own territory with the highest probability of success. By exploiting the advantages of the defense, the lethality of modern weapons and the

vulnerabilities of the Soviet military posture, NATO could build a staunch conventional defense from four fighting elements: regular combat units, Area Combat Troops (ACT's), support troops, and penetration forces.

These four elements would form a forward defense zone, a neutralization zone, and a rear defense zone. The forward defense zone would not be a wall designed to repel an invader, but rather a thicket designed to disorganize and cripple him. It would insure that penetration comes slowly at a heavy cost and that territory is not relinquished simply because Pact forces have transitted it. The forward defense zone would include extensively-prepared obstacles defended by regular forces and ACT's capable of being reinforced rapidly.³⁴

Regular combat units provide the primary conventional means of destroying Pact units. Initially, they would play the primary role in the forward defense zone, actively opposing initial Pact intrusions and then gradually withdrawing to conduct mobile operations in the neutralization zone. Combat engineer elements would set obstacles and minefields, supplemented by air and artillery-delivered scatterable mines³⁵ and area munitions. The large Pact numerical superiority means that NATO must strike a very difficult balance in the deployment of its own forces. It must have sizable regular combat units of its own, but reliance on long-distance US reinforcement must be decreased. For this reason, better liaison with French forces and contingency agreements for their employment are important.³⁶ NATO combat-ready maneuver units must not be placed so far forward nor tied so strongly to specific terrain that they are unable to react flexibly. Yet, NATO cannot adopt a maneuver defense which simply throws away the advantages of the defense. The overall NATO defense must be constructed so that its maneuver elements can depend on engaging Pact units under clearly favorable conditions.³⁷

The responsibility for developing such favorable conditions will rest heavily on the second element of the four-part defense—the ACT's. These would be strong territorial forces, largely reservists, with two major missions: rear area security behind NATO lines, and active combat operations within overrun or penetrated areas.

They would assume primary combat responsibilities as regular combat forces were pushed out of forward areas or as battle lines blurred into vaguely defined contested zones. They would

emphasize ambushes and standoff engagement of critical Pact elements, contributing to the continuous attrition and disruption of Warsaw Pact capabilities. Their own antiarmor weapons, mines, and mortars could be supplemented by artillery and close air support which, in turn, the ACT's could assist with beacon or laser designators. These efforts would concentrate on command, air defense, and mine-clearing vehicles. Area Combat Troops would neutralize Pact stragglers and make Pact efforts to establish flank security, a source of heavy Pact losses. Pact ammunition or fuel resupply and any operations involving exposed personnel would become high-risk activities.

Continuous attrition of Pact forces in the forward defense zone would greatly benefit NATO combat maneuver units. Area Combat Troops would also provide direct assistance within the neutralization zone by continuous disruption and intelligence operations.³⁸ At the same time, the ACT's would destroy Pact reconnaissance parties, throttling the Pact's own information-gathering capability. By exploiting the intelligence supplied by the ACT's and their disruption of Pact combat elements, NATO maneuver units could initiate controlled meeting engagements which did not sacrifice the inherent advantages of the defender.

Area Combat Troops would also destroy or contaminate supplies likely to be seized and used by Pact forces, encourage Pact desertions by providing haven to deserters, and incorporate any bypassed NATO units or personnel. In short, they would make the countryside as hostile as possible to Pact elements and as friendly as possible to NATO forces. Applying their detailed knowledge of the local region, ACT's would exploit relatively safe areas. By using prepared, well-hidden positions, they could retain at least a reporting capability for an extended period, as well as a capability to strike high value targets of opportunity. Their organization, equipment, and training would reflect the peculiarities of their operational zones, such as urban, forest, or mountain areas. By drawing on local resources and husbanding their initial ammunition supplies, they could operate for extended periods with little resupply. Where appropriate, they could also plan for wartime use of local government vehicles and other assets.³⁹

By emphasizing dispersion and standoff engagements, area combat operations would decrease Pact incentives to use weapons of mass destruction. Operating elusively and having their own

individual protective equipment, ACT's would make extremely poor targets for nuclear weapons and would be relatively safe from chemical or biological attack. They could also operate very effectively at night and in poor weather or on difficult terrain, conditions which can significantly hamper many other NATO elements. As a result of their ability to operate in small units and in a highly mobile and decentralized manner, they also are ideally suited for operations in urban areas.⁴⁰

Furthermore, being reserve forces closely tied to operations within their own country, ACT's would pose a minimal external threat and so provide maximum support to NATO peacetime political and diplomatic efforts. Since they would generally operate in their own home regions, they could be mobilized on short notice. Most ACT's could have their basic equipment at home and be familiar with designated emergency rally points.

Another major consideration which makes area combat forces especially attractive is the sheer volume of military manpower which could be involved. If NATO countries in the central region followed the Norwegian example and mobilized all available current and former, active and reserve manpower resources, there would be an additional seven million troops in this critical area. West Germany, in fact, already has two million men in its General Reserve, which the International Institute for Strategic Studies does not even count in its military manpower figures because they have no concrete defense assignments.⁴¹ It also has a Territorial Army, composed largely of reservists, which could expand to more than two hundred thousand troops within a few days of mobilization. These forces are basically area security forces, although they include six maneuver units—Home Defense Brigades—capable of reinforcing forward defense elements. The current wartime mission of the German Territorial Army calls for it to operate in the rear combat zone to maintain the operational freedom and logistic support of NATO forces. While its combat capabilities have been expanding steadily, there are no general plans for its incorporation into the NATO command structure or its employment in the forward defense zone (with the possible exception of the six Home Defense Brigades) or in overrun or contested areas.⁴² Because of these reservations, the Territorial Army now fills only a relatively small portion of its potential area combat role.

A number of other European countries, including Norway, Switzerland, and Yugoslavia, have strong territorial combat

forces.⁴³ Such forces have also been proposed for West Germany a number of times. Immediately after the war, British Air Marshal Sir John Slessor strongly advocated such a defense by supplementing active divisions with a

highly trained semistatic Home Guard armed primarily with antitank guns with light automatics as the personal weapon. The Federal Republic . . . should be covered with a network of these units composed of local men, knowing every inch of the ground, every coppice and stream, land and side street, responsible for the defence of their own Kreis and town or village and inspired by the knowledge that they are protecting their own homes and their own kith and kin. They would be responsible for the storage and protection of landmines in peace and of laying the minefields when so directed . . . Their job would be to block every road and destroy every tank moving across country in their zone.⁴⁴

Similarly, George Kennan—in his 1958 Reith Lectures over the British Broadcasting Corporation—stressed territorial forces as constituting the core of resistance in overrun areas; for this he was ridiculed by Willy Brandt in the German Parliament.⁴⁵

The question naturally arises as to why the Germans have been so wary of the concept, particularly since irregular forces in World War II tied up dozens of German divisions. Germany, of all countries, should be aware of the potential of such forces, yet has emphatically rejected their use except in rear areas. The rejection is undoubtedly tied to considerations for forward defense. The development of territorial forces implies preparations for extensive and prolonged fighting on one's own territory. The French, who have also developed strong territorial forces, try to avoid this implication by unequivocally emphasizing that their territorial forces are intended strictly for rear area security and not to repel invaders.⁴⁶ Germany, with Pact forces poised on its borders, cannot separate the two missions easily.

Territorial forces have also been faulted for their inability to conduct decisive operations against enemy forces. World War II German divisions were not defeated by irregular forces, and no one expects that territorial forces in Norway, Switzerland, or Yugoslavia would be able to repel an invasion of their countries. However, in Central Europe, territorial forces would be fighting in conjunction with sizable combat maneuver forces. As such, they would provide a greater capability than the tenacious, but essentially harassing, role performed by partisans in the past. For

this reason, this paper has termed them Area Combat Troops to stress that their primary task is neither to defend territory, nor to provide a basis for long-term resistance in occupied areas. Rather, it is to conduct active combat operations.

Within the NATO rear defense zone, ACT's would have the primary responsibility for security and for guaranteeing the mobility of NATO regular combat forces. Their pervasive operational net would make it difficult for Pact diversionary elements to operate efficiently, and would provide a local combat reaction capability against penetrations or airborne/heliborne raids. Using the same tactics as in the other two zones—subjecting hostile combat elements to constant attrition and continually reporting their position—they would prepare larger Pact penetration for neutralization by NATO maneuver or combat air elements. They could also provide for local defense of critical positions.

The third major combat element of the four-part defense is support troops. These troops would maintain close liaison with ACT's, and be prepared to conduct active combat operations in conjunction with them if the tactical situation required.

In fact, support troops should be an important combat force. When drawn into active combat, every support unit should be prepared to break down into an effective infantry organization, not just rifle teams. Selected individuals should be trained in the use of the wide range of weapons available to such units, and the command group should be prepared to implement standard combat procedures, such as requesting artillery support, reporting enemy movements, and coordinating activities with adjacent units; most importantly with the ACT's. Basically, NATO support units should be prepared to exert an active presence similar to and in conjunction with the ACT's in each of the various defense zones.⁴⁷ NATO cannot afford to have large numbers of troops unable to fight effectively against Pact units.

The final NATO combat element should be penetration forces intended to strike within Pact territory, interdicting Pact reinforcements, and taking the battle to enemy territory in order to avoid the self-deterrent effect of being prepared to fight only on NATO territory. The air, missile, and artillery strikes envisioned by AirLand Battle and NATO deep strike preparations have the potential to seriously disrupt Pact combat unit movements,

transportation nets, airfields, logistics, and command and control." At the same time, NATO Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols and light infantry elements can create maximum confusion in Pact tactical rear areas." They are also needed to collect the intelligence which deep strikes require and which signal intelligence and overhead coverage cannot adequately provide. These units should be prepared for insertion immediately upon the outbreak of hostilities. Operating within Pact territory, their activities would certainly be more restricted than those of the ACT's, but they would exploit the same Pact vulnerabilities—rigidly centralized command and control, vulnerable resupply columns, and dispersed small elements. By disrupting and reporting on Pact operations beyond the NATO border, they would aid the NATO military efforts significantly.

Within the Pact strategic rear area, NATO Special Forces would operate in conjunction with psychological appeals to disaffected elements of the indigenous populations. Regular combat forces could also be used to execute raids and diversionary attacks throughout Pact territory. By increasing the potential for internal disorder, they could provide additional disincentives for Pact operations against NATO and add an important dimension to NATO military capabilities. They would show that, even under nonnuclear conditions, any Pact initiation of hostilities would result in fighting and destruction on Pact territory.

Since such elements add an inherently offensive capability to the NATO posture, their type and size must be carefully measured. They must be strong enough to add imponderables into any Warsaw Pact assessment, yet should not be so strong that they pose a significant threat in their own right. For this reason, deep strike options cannot be the mainstay of the NATO defense—they run counter to the long-term thrust of NATO policy, and certainly against the grain of NATO Europe's search for improved relations with the East.

There is no military solution to this dilemma which is, after all, not a military dilemma. Military strategy cannot be fitted into a larger political strategy when the latter is only vaguely articulated. NATO's political strategy has to emphasize political solutions to East-West problems, but at the same time stress that a Pact attack will inevitably result in devastation within Eastern Europe. In the 1980's, the security of Western Europe will depend increasingly on

the capitals of Eastern Europe, on NATO's ability to discourage their support of any Soviet plans for military action.

REBUILDING NATO DEFENSE

The concepts sketched above outline an approach to a tough conventional defense which emphasizes the interaction of regular combat maneuver forces and Area Combat Troops within NATO territory and the broadening of NATO capabilities to strike into Pact territory. Regular combat units would be able to conduct a much more efficient maneuver defense because they would be engaging Pact units which already suffered attrition and disruption by ACT's and possibly by NATO penetration elements. Furthermore, continued improvement in NATO-French military cooperation could ease the requirement for rapid US reinforcement. NATO support troops must also improve their capability for active combat so that they can fight effectively in conjunction with ACT's against Pact airborne and airmobile forces or armor penetrations. Finally, NATO penetration elements should provide a capability to direct combat operations into the Pact's own territory to exploit significant Pact vulnerabilities.

One should not conclude that Area Combat Troops will be a panacea for European defense.⁵⁰ Significant resources invested in regular forces and careful planning will remain necessary if NATO is to fashion effective defenses.

While Area Combat Troops do not provide a simple answer, they do offer NATO forces in Central Europe a means of achieving a tough conventional defense using available resources. Furthermore, their essentially defensive posture would not threaten Eastern Europe or the Soviet Union. The area combat approach would also reduce the pressure for early resort to nuclear weapons and could free more US forces for engagements elsewhere, including flank reinforcement or penetration missions into Pact territory.

Evolution in this direction could build on a number of developments already in progress. First, the role of the German Territorial Army could be broadened to include closer liaison with NATO units and a gradual assumption of territorial combat responsibilities, perhaps initially in difficult terrain or in particularly critical urban areas. Second, continued development of antiarmor weapons and the adaptation of these weapons to what is likely to be a more dispersed and fast-moving battlefield

environment would contribute significantly to a general improvement in the overall military posture of NATO. Third, growing Franco-German military cooperation⁵¹ could ease the pressure for rapid US reinforcement. Finally, the United States has activated two Ranger battalions and, in conjunction with AirLand Battle concepts, is giving more thought to the use of these forces in the Pact rear area or on difficult NATO terrain.⁵²

The forward defense belt of NATO needs to be stiffened by more prepared obstacles, more dispersed gun positions, and more extensive mine warfare preparations. On a larger scale, the Alliance must develop a comprehensive East European policy which is in harmony with the evolution of the NATO defense posture. An essential goal of this policy should be to reduce East European incentives to join in a Soviet move westward. It is time to reverse the train of thought which concedes all the advantages to the Warsaw Pact. Rather, NATO should be prepared to exploit its potential to destroy a conventional attack by conventional means.

Taken as a whole, the NATO military posture should add as many imponderables as possible into Soviet assessments of military operations in Central Europe.⁵³ Invading forces should expect constant attrition of critical elements, uncertain resupply and an ever-present potential for sudden direct engagement on unfavorable terms.

Few developments could advance long-term prospects for stability in Europe as much as turning the Soviet armor goliath into a white elephant, a mammoth but unusable millstone around the neck of Pact economic and social development. Paired with an essentially defensive NATO posture, this would undermine the Pact justification for excessive standing military forces and discourage the current high levels of Soviet direct military expenditures in the European theater. By disabusing the Soviets of any notion of military or even political utility of high force levels in Europe,⁵⁴ a credible NATO conventional defense could be combined with the carrots of economic and social exchanges to institutionalize a Soviet shift to peaceful social competition and eventual cooperation in addressing the wider problems confronting Europe. In the final analysis, an effective defense policy must be combined with political, military, economic, and psychological factors into a comprehensive allied strategy. Otherwise, not only will problems of cohesion continue to plague NATO, but clear criteria for evaluating defense programs will remain out of reach.⁵⁵

ENDNOTES

1. Earl Ravenal in "Counterforce and Alliance," *International Security*, Spring 1982, p. 27, offers a thoughtful discussion of the intertwined concerns of deterrence, cost, and credibility. Concern over the implications of an emphasis on nuclear weapons was already being expressed in the 1940's, but it was simply ignored (Eugene Rabinowitch, "Forewarned—But Not Forearmed," in *The Atomic Age*, ed. by Morton Grodzins and Eugene Rabinowitch, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1965, pp. 137-143). For a current European view on nuclear weapons as "a cheap way out," see Pierre Lellouche, "Does NATO Have a Future?," *The Washington Quarterly*, Summer 1982, p. 47. See also Sam Nunn, "Saving the Alliance," *The Washington Quarterly*, Summer 1982, p. 21.
2. McGeorge Bundy, et al., "Nuclear Weapons and the Atlantic Alliance," *Foreign Affairs*, Spring 1982, pp. 757 and 765.
3. Michael Howard, "The Relevance of Traditional Strategy," *Foreign Affairs*, January 1973, p. 261.
4. Karl Kaiser, et al., "Nuclear Weapons and the Preservation of Peace," *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1982, pp. 1157-1170.
5. Gary Eifried, "Russian CW: Our Achilles' Heel, Europe," *Army*, December 1979, pp. 24-28; Matthew Meselson and Julian Perry Robinson, "Chemical Warfare and Chemical Disarmament," *Scientific American*, April 1980, p. 38; "Aspin Reports on Sverdlovsk Blast," *Defense Week*, June 30, 1980, p. 1; and US Department of State, "Chemical Warfare in Southeast Asia and Afghanistan: An Update," Special Report No. 104, November 1982.
6. For a detailed discussion of the strategic imperatives of the forward defense, see Colin S. Gray, *Defending NATO Europe*, Hudson Institute Report DNA-4567F, November 1977, pp. 8-16.
7. Gary L. Guertner, "Nuclear War in Suburbia," *Orbis*, Spring 1982, pp. 49-70, and Paul Bracken, "Urban Sprawl and the NATO Defense," *Survival*, November/December 1976, pp. 254-260.
8. "Soviet Airborne Forces," *Aerospace International*, March-April 1973, p. 13; David C. Schlachter and Fred J. Stubbs, "Special Operations Forces: Not Applicable?," *Military Review*, February 1978, pp. 23-24; Robert Close, *Europe Without Defense?*, New York: Pergamon Press 1979, pp. 183-184; C. N. Donnelly, "Operations in the Enemy Rear," *International Defense Review*, No. 1, 1980, pp. 35-41; and C. N. Donnelly, "The Soviet Operational Maneuver Group: A New Challenge for NATO," *Military Review*, March 1983, pp. 43-60.
9. For example, the current Army manual (FM 29-77, June 20, 1980) on the Supply and Transportation Company in a separate combat brigade does not even mention fighting armor. This is slowly being changed, as in the present training and evaluation program for the Support Battalion Headquarters and Headquarters Company in separate brigades (ARTEP 29-156, April 7, 1982) which addresses defense against light armor vehicles and the need for liaison with artillery and combat air support units—certainly steps in the right direction.
10. Of the 17 combat-ready divisions potentially available for NATO reinforcement, 13 are from the United States (and 3 others are French); some smaller units are also available. See John M. Collins and Anthony H. Cordesman, *Imbalance of Power*, San Rafael, California: Praesidio Press, 1978, pp. 284-287. For analysis of the problems in moving these US reinforcements and the need for

their rapid support, see D. M. O. Miller, "Strategic Factors Affecting a Soviet Conventional Attack in Western Europe," *International Defense Review*, No. 6, 1978, pp. 858-859; "US Ground Forces: Already Too Large to Fight," *The Defense Monitor*, November 1978, pp. 4-6; Robert Lucas Fischer, *Defending the Central Front: The Balance of Forces*, Adelphi Papers No. 127, Autumn 1976, pp. 18-25; John Fialka, "Ill-Equipped, Undermanned US Army is Decimated in 'Nifty Nugget' Exercise," *The Washington Star*, November 2, 1979, pp. 1, 2; and Daniel Gans, "'Fight Outnumbered and Win' . . . Against What Odds?," *Military Review*, December 1980, pp. 31-46.

11. Short of war, there can be no definitive determination of this point, but assessments give little basis for Soviet confidence. See Dale R. Herspring and Ivan Volgyes, "Political Reliability in the Eastern European Warsaw Pact Armies," *Armed Forces and Society*, Winter 1980, pp. 270-296.

12. See, for example, George Kennan's comments in *Memoirs: 1950-1963*, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1972, pp. 97-100, on agitation within the United States for support of intervention in East Europe.

13. Strobe Talbott, ed. and trans., *Khrushchev Remembers*, London: Little, Brown and Company, 1970, p. 393; see also pp. 361-364.

14. For a current view on offensive versus defensive orientations, see Jonathan Alford, "NATO's Conventional Forces and the Soviet Mobilization Potential," *NATO Review*, June 1980, pp. 18-22. For commentary on East European views, see Jack E. Owen, Jr., *Political and Strategic Assessment of the US Military Commitment to NATO*, Annapolis: US Naval Academy, May 21, 1973, pp. 92-96.

15. See Benjamin S. Lambeth, "Uncertainties for the Soviet War Planner," *International Security*, Vol. 7, Winter 1982/1983, pp. 139-166.

16. US Defense Intelligence Agency, *Soviet Tank Battalion Tactics*, Report DDB-1120-10-80, November 1980, pp. 3-5. The commanders' tanks are critical nodes in the radio nets, and these are the only tanks that do not move in groups.

17. John Keegan, "Soviet Blitzkrieg: Who Wins?," *Harper's*, May 1982, pp. 46-53; Guertner, pp. 61-62; "Quick Europe War Called Soviet Aim," *The New York Times*, October 10, 1982.

18. The Soviets are clearly aware of the difficulty and have emphasized increasingly the role of dismounted infantry in a combined arms attack. Dismounting, however, slows the attack.

19. George H. Heilmeyer, "NATO Defense Technology Outlines," *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, July 17, 1978, pp. 64-66; Palmer Osborn and William Bowen, "How to Defend Western Europe," *Fortune*, October 9, 1978, pp. 152-153; antitank capabilities are critical, and this is an area of high technological emphasis. See Robert Kennedy, "Precision ATGMs and NATO Defense," *Orbis*, Winter 1979, pp. 897-927; John J. Mearsheimer, "Precision-Guided Munitions and Conventional Deterrence," *Survival*, March/April 1979, pp. 69-71; John Marriott, "Anti-Tank Warfare," *NATO's Fifteen Nations*, May 1979, pp. 61-68; Seymour Deitchman, *New Technology and Military Power*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1979; Paul F. Walker, "Precision-Guided Weapons," *Scientific American*, August 1981, pp. 37-45; and Benjamin Schemmer, "NATO's New Strategy: Defend Forward But STRIKE DEEP!," *Armed Forces Journal International*, November 1982, p. 65.

20. John J. Mearsheimer, "Why the Soviets Can't Win Quickly in Central Europe," *International Security*, Summer 1982, pp. 3-39.

21. Richard K. Betts, "Surprise Attack: NATO's Political Vulnerability," Spring 1981, pp. 117-149.
22. US Department of the Army, *Operations, FM 100-5*, August 20, 1982, Chapter 7, Schemmer, pp. 50-68.
23. *Operations*, p. 7-13.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 7-14.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 6-4.
26. *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7, 6-8.
27. Trevor N. Dupuy, "Why Deep Strike *Won't* Work," *Armed Forces Journal International*, January 1983, p. 57.
28. *Operations*, p. 7-15.
29. Lellouche, p. 51.
30. Francois de Rose, "Inflexible Response," *Foreign Affairs*, Fall 1982, pp. 141-142.
31. A stark assessment of the growing Warsaw Pact relative strength is in Justin Galen, "Restoring the NATO-Warsaw Pact Balance: 'The Art of the Impossible'," *Armed Forces Journal International*, September 1978, pp. 32-33. See also William Schneider, Jr., "Soviet General Purpose Forces," *Orbis*, Spring 1977, pp. 99-105; Leslie H. Gelb, "Questions and Answers on the Military Balance in Europe," *The New York Times*, April 11, 1982, p. E-3.
32. Robert Jarvis, "Deterrence and Perception," *International Security*, Winter 1982/1983, pp. 3-30; see also Ravenal, p. 36.
33. See T. N. Dupuy, "The Nondebate Over How Army Should Fight," *Army*, June 1982, pp. 34-45.
34. The use of fortified positions has been neglected by NATO, partly because the Maginot Line misleadingly serves as a symbol of their uselessness and partly due to a reluctance to emphasize the East-West border. For discussions of the potential security gains from fortifications, see Keegan, pp. 52-53; Joshua M. Epstein, "On Conventional Deterrence in Europe: Questions of Soviet Confidence," *Orbis*, Spring 1982, pp. 85-86; Waldo D. Freeman, Jr., *NATO Central Region Forward Defense*, National Security Affairs Issue Paper No. 81-3, Washington: National Defense University, 1981, pp. 7-8, 11-14; William O. Staudenmaier, "Some Strategic Implications of Fighting Outnumbered on the NATO Battlefield," *Military Review*, May 1980, pp. 45-46; Raymond E. Bell, Jr., "Fighting From Fortified Battle Positions," *Army*, July 1979, pp. 34-39; and Robert Komer, "Is Conventional Defense of Europe Feasible?," *Naval War College Review*, September-October 1982, p. 83.
35. Mine warfare also has been a badly neglected component of the NATO posture. Recent developments have significantly increased its potential for slowing any Pact attack. See Michael A. Andrews, "Tank Delivered Scatterable Mines," *Military Review*, December 1978, pp. 34-39, and Martin B. Chase, "Scatterable Mines," *Army Research, Development and Acquisition Magazine*, March-April 1980, pp. 6-9.
36. Komer (page 84), among others, stressed the importance of cooperation with the French. Such cooperation is consistent with current French defense policy. See Peter J. Barger, "The Course of French Defense Policy," *Parameters*, September 1982, pp. 19-26.
37. See John J. Mearsheimer, "Maneuver, Mobile Defense, and the NATO Central Front," *International Security*, Winter 1981/1982, pp. 104-122, for a detailed discussion of the dangers of adopting a traditional mobile defense.

38. Although ACT's would play only a secondary role in the forward defense zone, they could have primary responsibility for sectors with more difficult terrain, urban belts, critical strongpoints, and dug-in artillery or air defense positions. In those areas where maneuver elements were conducting active operations, ACT's would provide liaison teams and assist with the detailed knowledge of the local area.

39. Such a development of Area Combat Troops would be compatible with the "forest infantry" and "blocking divisions" advocated by Steven Canby in "Mutual Force Reductions: A Military Perspective," *International Security*, Winter 1978, p. 130. See also his other articles: "Dumping Nuclear Counterforce Incentives: Correcting NATO's Inferiority in Conventional Military Strength," *Orbis*, Spring 1975, pp. 54-55; and "Territorial Defense in Europe," *Armed Forces and Society*, Fall 1980, pp. 51-67; William E. Simons, *Some Thoughts on Future European Defense*, Rand Report P.6188, August 1978, pp. 25-26; William O. Staudenmaier, "Territorial Defense: An Ace in the Hole for NATO," *Army*, February 1978, pp. 35-38 (with comments by Daniel D. Plant in *Army*, May 1978, p. 2, stressing the usefulness of these forces, particularly in the enemy rear area); Close, p. 219 (stressing their use in forested or urban area); Walter Stutzle, "The Impact of New Conventional Weapon Technology on NATO Military Doctrine and Organization," *New Conventional Weapons and East-West Security, Part I*, Adelphi Paper No. 144, Spring 1978, pp. 26-27; and Frederick Sowery, "An Unconventional Approach to Defense Resources," *Survival*, November/December 1982, pp. 252-259.

40. For analysis of urban warfare under current conditions, see Bracken. Also: P. H. Vigor, "Fighting in Built-Up Areas: A Soviet View—Part I," *Journal of the Royal United Services Institute*, June 1977, pp. 331-347; C. N. Donnelly, "Fighting in Built-Up Areas: A Soviet View—Part II," *Journal of the Royal United Services Institute*, September 1977, pp. 63-67; "Soviet Techniques for Combat in Built-Up Areas," *International Defense Review*, No. 2/77, pp. 238-242; and US Army Science Board, Final Report, *Ad Hoc Group on Military Operations in Built-Up Areas (MOBA)*, Washington, 1978.

41. See *The Military Balance 1979-1980*, p. 25, and Rudolph Woller, ed., *Reservists-Partners at Home and Abroad*, Bonn: Wehr and Wissen, 1978, p. 8. The assessment that NATO Europe could or should improve its reserve utilization is a very common one: see Kenneth Hunt, *The Alliance and Europe: Part III: Defense With Fewer Men*, Adelphi Paper No. 98, Summer 1973, pp. 31-32; Close, pp. 195, 219; Fischer, pp. 35-40; and Rudolph Woller, *Warsaw Pact Reserve Systems*, Munchen: Bernard and Graefe Verlag, 1978, pp. 20-21.

42. *White Paper 1979*, Bonn: Federal Minister of Defense, September 4, 1979, pp. 154-156. For one approach to expanding the capabilities of West Germany's Territorial Army, see Robert Kennedy, "NATO Defense Posture in an Environment of Strategic Parity and Precision Weaponry," in *Strategies, Alliances and Military Power: Changing Roles*, Leyden, The Netherlands: A. W. Sijthoff, 1977.

43. For descriptions of these forces, see Adam Roberts, *Nations in Arms*, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1976, Chapters 3, 6, and 7.

44. Cited in Horst Menderhausen, *Territorial Defense in NATO and non-NATO Europe*, Rand Report R-1184-ISA, February 1973, p. 37. See also: Udo Philipp, "NATO Strategy Under Discussion in Bonn," *International Defense Review*, No. 9, 1980, pp. 1367-1371.

45. *Encounters With Kennan*, Totowa, New Jersey: Frank Cass and Co., Ltd., 1979, pp. 24, 66.

46. Pierre Michel, "La Nouvelle Orientation de la Defense Operationnelle du Territoire," *Defense Nationale*, January 1978, p. 42.

47. Edward A. Corcoran, "Support Troops in Combat Operations," *Army Logistician*, January-February 1978, pp. 18-23.

48. The Warsaw Pact logistics infrastructure is assessed as an area of potentially disastrous shortcomings. See Jacquelyn K. Davis and Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr., *Soviet Theater Strategy: Implications for NATO*, United States Strategic Institute Report 78-1, p. 44. See also C. N. Donnelly, "Rear Support for the Soviet Ground Forces," *International Defense Review*, No. 3, 1979, pp. 345-349; and "Tactical Problems Facing the Soviet Army," *International Defense Review*, No. 9, 1978, p. 1410; Graham H. Turbiville, "Soviet Logistic Support for Ground Operations," *Military Review*, July 1976, pp. 34-38; and Richard P. Clayberg, *The Problem of Soviet Vulnerabilities*, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania: Strategic Studies Institute, December 30, 1977.

49. Henry G. Gole, "Bring Back the LRRP," *Military Review*, October 1981, pp. 2-10.

50. Training is a constant problem in all the countries with large territorial reserve forces. Although this problem can be eased by relatively simple-to-operate weapons and by a high degree of individual specialization, constant work is needed to maintain the proficiency of territorial reservists. Supply would also require careful planning as Area Combat Troops may well have to rely on their initial supplies and caches for an extended period.

51. "Paris-Bonn Military Ties: A Time for Reappraisal," *The New York Times*, October 20, 1982.

52. See "The Employment of Non-Mechanized Infantry," *Journal of the Royal United Services Institute*, December 1980, pp. 56-69.

53. The importance of uncertainties to a deterrent posture can hardly be overstressed. See Stanley Sienkiewicz, "Observations on the Impact of Uncertainty in Strategic Analysis," *World Politics*, October 1979, pp. 90-110; Daniel O. Graham, *A New Strategy for the West*, Washington: The Heritage Foundation, 1977, pp. 49-50.

54. The political use of Soviet forces is often seen as more threatening than their actual military use. See Robert Art's commentary, "To What Ends Military Power?," *International Security*, Spring 1980, pp. 3-35, on the "swaggering" use of military force.

55. Edward Heath, "10 Precepts for a Strategy," *The New York Times*, March 19, 1980, p. A27; Wolfgang W. E. Samuel, "The Impossible Task—Defense Without Relevant Strategy," *Air University Review*, March-April 1980, pp. 15-25; Michael Howard, "The Forgotten Dimensions of Strategy," *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1979, pp. 975-986.

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21. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) This memorandum examines the nature of the conventional balance in Europe today and proposes methods for improving NATO's conventional capabilities. The author notes public concern about increasing levels of nuclear weapons in Europe has spurred a search on both sides of the Atlantic for alternative ways to meet NATO's defense needs. Unfortunately, the parallel Soviet conventional force buildup and an awareness of many of NATO's defense problems (e.g., manpower and equipment shortfalls, unit maldistributions and overreliance on US reinforcements) help to reinforce impressions that a NATO conventional defense is simply out of		

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reach.

The author contends, however, that the Warsaw Pact has its own serious problems, including questionable reliability of its non-Soviet forces, lengthy lines of communication, an overreliance on armor and light defenses in its tactical rear areas. The author believes that by exploiting such Pact problems, NATO can develop a credible conventional defense. This memorandum proposes such a defense based on four main combat elements: regular maneuver forces, Area Combat Troops, support units and penetration elements. ←

Area Combat Troops would be strong territorial forces--largely reservists--with the mission of actively engaging Pact forces to insure they suffer both attrition and disruption prior to the time when they move onto NATO territory. By selective standoff engagement of critical Pact elements and constant reporting of Pact movements, Area Combat Troops could take a heavy toll of any invading forces while regular combat forces would be able to conduct a much more effective mobile defense. Support troops could also develop capabilities to fight, when necessary, in the same general fashion as, and in conjunction with, Area Combat Troops.

The author argues that by presenting poor targets for nuclear or chemical strikes, Area Combat Troops would discourage Pact use of these weapons. At the same time, being territorial elements designed for operations within their own countries, they would pose no external threat. This would undermine Pact claims that its heavy armor forces are needed to counter a threat from NATO and would support long-term arms reduction efforts.

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